



Office of Dispute Resolution Nebraska Judicial Branch

Juvenile Victim Offender Mediation Expansion Project: 2015 - 2016

Fact Sheet

1. Initiated by **LB561 (2013)** and **LB464 (2014)**, and as part of the Nebraska Judicial Branch's goal to increase accountability of juvenile offenders and address the needs of victims of offenses committed by youth, the Office of Dispute Resolution is expanding the availability of juvenile victim offender mediation (VOM) by Nebraska's juvenile and county judges and probation.
2. To accomplish its goal, the Office of Dispute Resolution is partnering with internationally acclaimed leader, researcher, and practitioner, Dr. Mark Umbreit and his team from the University of Minnesota's Center for Restorative Justice and Peacemaking to provide policy development, training, stakeholder education, and program evaluation of the VOM model of practice.
3. Victim Offender Mediation is a research-based restorative justice model that prevents deep justice system involvement for offender youth and enhances courts' restorative responses to victims of crime.
4. Juvenile VOM is an evidence-based intervention which results in:
 - a. lower recidivism rates by the youthful offender;
 - b. increased restitution to the person harmed; and
 - c. improved level of satisfaction for the court process by both victims and youthful offenders.
5. Through a grant with the Sherwood Foundation and matching funds from the Judicial Branch, an enhanced component of the VOM project is being piloted in Douglas County by the Concord Mediation Center and the 12th Judicial District by Mediation West.
6. Juvenile VOM is currently available statewide through the six regional ODR-approved mediation centers.
7. Statewide, mediators will be trained in victim offender dialogue and protocols will be developed to be practiced by all of the state's county and juvenile courts and mediation centers.
8. Judges may order a youth to victim offender mediation at any time after a juvenile court petition has been filed and prior to assignment to probation case management. The mediation center will assess the case, interview the youth and victim separately, determine whether it is appropriate to proceed in setting up a joint VOM session, and file final reports with the referring judge.

For more information, please contact:

Debora Denny

Director, Nebraska Office of Dispute Resolution
Nebraska State Court Administrator's Office
402.471.2766 or debora.denny@nebraska.gov